

# InSpire

## A look back at 2021 as we move forward in 2022

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Susie Jones

It has been a privilege to serve as Senior Warden during an

amazing and inspiring year. In 2021 we saw the completion of our years-long building project, our move into our beautiful new church building, and the movement of families into The Spire apartments. This was all possible with the hard work of the many of you in the congregation that made this project possible.

As Advent began, the church was decorated with window hangings that Farrell Hartigan made depicting candles and the trip to Bethlehem. These joined the beautiful seasonal altar frontals and linen sets designed and made by Ken Gay. Just before Christmas Eve, we added wreaths, flowers, and manger scenes. Thanks to all who helped to decorate the church for the holidays. It was our first Christmas at our new church building and we can look forward to many more.

Many thanks to Deena Jaworski, who has faithfully

combined all the recordings made by the choir members each week to provide music for our in person and on line services during the pandemic. She and our great choir have produced amazing music that is an important part of our services.

The Memorial Garden has a newly laid flagstone path and sitting area. It looks great and is easy to walk on. You can read more about this progress on page 5 and join me in thanking Carolyn McDonald for making it happen. As I looked at the garden recently, I remembered the All Saints Day services where we read the names of all the parishioners and friends whose ashes are there.

We welcome Tom Conroy our new organist/pianist on January 9. You can read about Tom on page 4.

We collected Christmas gifts for the 84 children who live at The Spire. You can read about this great event on page 6. I thank Betsy Faga, Al Tiedemann, Helen McIlvaine, Lea Fowlie, and Eleonora Gafton, who pulled this off.

Our food pantry continues to feed people in need. There is an article on page 7 about this great ministry of our church.

We welcome the new Vestry members: Kathy Parnell, Coral Childs, Barbara Eversman, Bea Taylor, Linda Goff, Dennis Jones, and Ken Gay, who join continuing members Cynthia Bullard-Perez, Barbara Langford, Betsy Faga, Ken Payne, Peggy Tiedemann, and Kim Hildred (*ex officio*). Thank you to them, and to all our off-going Vestry members.

After our annual meeting on December 5, the new Vestry elected Linda Goff as Senior Warden, Coral Childs as Junior Warden, Ken Gay its Treasurer, and Kim Hildred its *ex officio* Register. At its December meeting, the 2022 Vestry members decided on their ministry areas for 2022. There's a listing in Linda Goff's article on page 3.

I thank the other off-going Vestry members who served our church so well: Maureen Bryant, Ray Isaacs, Susan Weber, Dorothy Pennant, Lawrence Huskin, Dick DeMeester, Ruth Allen, and Carolyn McDonald.

I hope that we remain a congregation of caring, resilient and flexible people.

~ Susie Jones



Jo Belser, our Rector

## Envisioning 2022

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” (Acts 2:42)



### 2022 Vestry

**Senior Warden**  
Linda Goff

**Junior Warden**  
Coral Childs

**Treasurer**  
Ken Gay

**Register** (ex officio)  
Kim Hildred

**Creating Community**  
Betsy Faga

Kim Hildred

Kathy Parnell

Barbara Langford

**Healing Community**  
Coral Childs

Barbara Eversman

Bea Taylor

Peggy Tiedemann

**Learning Community**  
Linda Goff

Cynthia Bullard-Perez

Ken Gay

Dennis Jones

Ken Payne

What are *you* planting in 2022? How about planting community: encounters—in person or online—with deep care and authentic connections. Our church community is focused on Christ rather than on us.

We can’t plant community alone. Community requires a wide variety of people, all “in” together despite their differences.

Community requires being together. We gather to worship, our primary mission as we share Christ’s holy meal. We “do” life together. We study scripture and pray together.

By the time you read this, our Vestry will have set its goals for 2022. In general, though, here’s what you might expect in 2022:

First, we have a gloriously renovated garden in which to gather outdoors. Carolyn

McDonald is figuring out where to put a self-guided Stations of the Cross circuit in the Memorial Garden. I would welcome your ideas about how else we might meet there this year.

Second, I’m envisioning a celebratory organ concert, pandemic permitting, when it is when our installer finishes his work.

Third, I envision ashes to go outdoors (as well as indoors on Ash Wednesday, March 2).

Fourth, Chris Yeannakis is proposing a “Bible and Breakfast” event (also known as “Messy Church” on Sunday, March 27, at 9:00 am for people of all ages to share a faith-related experience.

In April, I envision Palm Sunday (April 10), Holy Week, and Easter Sunday (April 17), the first anniversary in our building.

I don’t yet know what those will include this year, and am collecting your ideas.

I have no visions for the Resurrection Community during the time of our sabbatical (beginning the day after Easter until August 14), but you will. I expect that this will be a time of great growth for us all as you and Rev. Susan bond in new ways. I expect that we will need some time afterward to get reacquainted as we begin a new chapter in our life together.

That’s as far as my vision stretches into 2020. You will notice that my vision list for 2022 is action-oriented. There is a great list of fellowship, outreach, and other plans that will emerge in the reports of our January 8 Vestry Conference. Stay tuned, and “plant flowers.”

~ Rev. Jo

## Four ministry communities for a new year

During the final months of 2021, Resurrection Community came together at Forums to discern the ministries which we wanted to begin or continue during 2022. Four main ministry areas have evolved from those discussions. They are building, healing, living, and worshiping (in) community. During our Vestry retreat, specific goals for each ministry will be proposed. But what is the composition of each ministry?

**Creating Community** will be continuing and implementing new outreach ministries. It will connect with residents of The Spire and other communities in our city. The extraordinary care of our Memorial Garden and grounds will continue.

**Healing Community** will explore new horizons in Creation Care and Racial Justice and Healing. It will continue to minister to our Resurrection Community with our Fellowship and Parish Care ministries. It will ensure the continuing maintenance of our wonderful new church building as a place of healing for all it welcomes.

**Learning Community** will encompass our faith formation ministries for Adults and our Children and Youth. It also will include our other continuing ministries of

Communications and Stewardship, the latter of which encompasses our financial management ministry, as well.

**Worshiping Community** will involve all those areas which are essential to creating a spiritual Sunday worship experience, both in-person and on-line. This mission area includes the Altar Guild, Acolytes, Crucifers, Lectors, Choir and Music Ministry, and our Sunday Tech team.

This may seem like an overly ambitious agenda. Yet, in our second reading on Sunday January 16, from First Corinthians, we hear proclaimed:

*“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”*

This scripture us that the Spirit is moving among us, within us, and through us.

Each member of Resurrection has been given gifts which are unique to them. When we use these gifts, we are not only responding to God’s call to make our world a more loving place, but are also affirming that the Lord will sustain us in whatever we do in his name.

If you are not yet connected to a ministry area or are interested in one of the new areas, please let me or Rev. Jo know. We need each person in Resurrection Community to share their unique gifts. More importantly, the Lord needs each of us, through our gifts, to proclaim his love to the world! After all, God has put us together for a purpose.

~ Linda Goff



Linda Goff

*“We need each person in Resurrection Community to share their unique gifts.”*

**About InSpire**  
InSpire is the monthly newsletter of the Church of the Resurrection, describing the people of our congregation and our faith journey together. The following individuals contributed to this issue of InSpire:

- Jimena Amurio, Design
- The Rev. Jo Belser
- Cynthia Bullard-Perez, Acquisitions
- Tom Conroy
- Betsy Faga
- Lea Fowlie, editing
- Lenore Funkhouser, photos
- Linda Goff
- Susie Jones
- Kat Turner

Ministry Leaders for 2022

Creating Community	Betsy Faga	
Community	Kat Turner	Kim Hildred
Outreach	Maureen Bryant David Ewing	Everyone involved in outreach ministries
Grounds/ Memorial Garden	Kathy Parnell/ Carolyn McDonald	Barbara Langford
Healing Community	Coral Childs	
Creation Care	Judy Isaacs (?)	Barbara Eversman
Racial Justice and Healing	Bea Taylor	Amanda Vann, and Sacred Ground grads
Building	Peggy Tiedemann	Al Tiedemann
Fellowship	Margaret Riccardelli (?)	Susie Jones
Parish Care	Emily Ewing	Parish Care Team
Learning Community	Linda Goff	
Adult Ed	Chris Yeannakis	Reggie Hayes
Children and Youth	Gay Colyer/McBeths	Kenneth Payne
Communications	Cynthia Bullard-Perez	Susan Weber
Stewardship/Finance	Ken Gay	Dennis Jones
Worshiping Community	Rev. Jo	
Altar Guild	Lori Thurgood	Altar Guild members
Crucifers	Rev. Sarah (children)	Betsy Faga (adults)
Lectors	Louise Bennett	—
Music	Deena Jaworski	Tom Conroy
Tech	Kathy Graham	Jimena Amurio

## We welcome Tom Conroy to Resurrection

*“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”*

Thomas Conroy arrived in Alexandria last August to begin studies at Virginia Theological Seminary in its Pathway to Ministry program. To quote VTS' Web site, “Pathway to Ministry is a one-year academic program ... for students who have not yet engaged in a discernment process but wish to pursue formal theological education in an academically rigorous and spiritually nurturing environment.” Translation: Tom is exploring priesthood in the Episcopal Church, but has not yet formally begun the process of seeking to become a priest.

Here's what Tom has shared to introduce himself to you:

After attending and serving as a musician in many Episcopal parishes for the past thirty years, Tom joined Church of the Resurrection by being Confirmed at St. Andrew's, Burke, Virginia, in December of 2021. So, at the moment, Tom is the newest member of our congregation.

Tom spent the past few years in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, serving as a music minister for Saint Mary of the Mount, a Roman Catholic Church, and practicing and studying for the American Guild of Organists' Certification Exams: Colleague (November 2020) and

Associate (June 2021). Prior to the pandemic, Tom was in his second stint as a professional actor, based in Manhattan, working off-Broadway, in regional theater, and on tour.

Tom graduated from:

- St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico (Master of Liberal Arts / Great Books Program),
- Rice University's Shepherd School of Music (Doctor of Musical Arts/ Composition), and
- San Francisco Conservatory of Music (Master of Music/ Composition).

In addition, he began the Doctor of Audiology program at Ball State University, but dropped out, preferring to portray an audiologist on stage or on television instead.

Growing up in Youngstown, Ohio, he served as organist/pianist for his home parish, St. Maron (Maronite Catholic-Middle Eastern Rite), while in high school. Half Lebanese and half Irish, he embraces the heritage of both and holds dual citizenship in the United States of America and Ireland.

Tom's ministry calling and focus comprises bereavement, the



Tom Conroy

imprisoned, and churches and people in transition. He is glad to be a new member of the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection and looks forward to meeting everyone, sharing in our mutual mission, and making music.

Tom's favorite scripture: Ephesians 4:4-6 (text in sidebar).

~ Tom Conroy

For now, Tom will play at our 9:00, 10:00, and 11:00 am services on Sundays. Because our organ installation has been delayed (AGAIN!) Tom will initially be playing the piano. And he, like we, will endure scaffolding in the church when the organ pipes are being installed. It will be wonderful to have an organ for music for our services once again.

~ Susie Jones

## The hardscape is progressing

The Memorial Garden has new and improved “hardscape.” For those who don’t know this term, hardscape is material incorporated into landscape that isn’t plants. Some common hardscape is paved areas, retaining walls, walkways, and things made of hard wearing materials. (This definition courtesy of Wikipedia...)

The hardscape in our Memorial Garden now includes a newly laid flagstone path into the center circle. The benches that usually are there haven’t yet been returned, but it makes a very nice seating area. The new flagstone path looks great and is easy to walk on.



*The new flagstone path to the center of the garden*

There also is a new gravel path up the hill on the right side. This path now ends at another, new flagstone sitting area at the top with chairs and benches to sit on. The chairs and benches and

some of the cost of hardscaping were gifts of Goodwin House Alexandria, which owns the property on which most of our shared Memorial Garden sits.



*Path to the new seating area in the southwest corner of the garden*

There also now is a storage bench near the wall of the Goodwin House parking garage that forms the back wall of the garden. The bench is hand for sitting and stores garden tools near to where they are needed.



*The new seating area*

I thank the 17 or so people who helped make this transformation happen, especially Carolyn McDonald and Roland Blocksom. We also thank

the many, many people who have contributed money to support this project.



*Two new holly bushes, before the snow storm in January*

The two new holly bushes definitely do not qualify as “hardscape.” However, they are glorious right now, especially against the snow that remains in the garden from the winter’s first snowstorm.

New helpers are always welcome if you like to garden.

One of the next phases of the Memorial Garden is to use it in new ways. For instance, we still have the Stations of the Cross we made for and used in the old chapel grounds at the seminary. Rev. Jo and Carolyn McDonald are talking about temporarily installing them throughout the garden for Lent this year. What are your other ideas?

*~ Compiled from many reports*

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*“One of the next phases of the Memorial Garden is to use it in new ways.”*

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Betsy Faga

## Resurrection elves share Christmas with children at The Spire

Fancy dresses, silver sparkling shoes, and broad smiles. That was the scene on Christmas Eve as the Resurrection Elves greeted the children from The Spire and their parents. Over 45 children arrived between 6:00 and 7:00 pm to receive an age-appropriate gift along with a cup of hot chocolate with marshmallows and a candy cane. Most of them were between 2 and 12 years old.

Our thanks go to the many Resurrection parishioners who brought one or more gifts to share with the children. There was a wide array for various ages. We only regret is that the two church services scheduled for 5:00 and 7:00 pm had to go virtual and more parishioners couldn't enjoy this time on the plaza with our neighbors. But let us give you a verbal picture and do check out Resurrection's Facebook page for photos.

For those of us participating, it was a heartwarming time. The hit of the evening was Head Elf Al Tiedemann taking advantage of his COVID-grown white beard (even though it was partially hidden by a mask) and decked out in red shirt, red suspenders, red Christmas socks, and red Santa cap. Some were shy at first when

approaching Elf Al but soon warmed to his smiling eyes and kind words. His boss Santa Claus would be proud! As each child told Elf Al their age; Elf's Courtney Brinckerhoff, Lea Fowlie, Eleonora Gafton and Linda Goff pulled a gift from the appropriate aged bag for Santa to give the children. Meanwhile in the pantry, Elf Helen McIlvaine put together a delicious cup of hot chocolate placed on a tray and distributed to the children and parents. She was assisted by Elf Betsy Faga.

Children and their parent(s) spent time in the plaza visiting with each other, the Resurrection elves, and Rev. Jo and Rev. Susan.

Of the many special moments, one was a mother with two children probably aged 15 months and 3 who was so excited to get their picture taken with Elf Al. The little one was placed on the card table in front of Elf Al and the older next to him. After a few whimpers from the youngest, a picture was snapped and may be seen on Resurrection's Facebook page.

Rev. Susan said "You could almost see behind the mask the smile from the little girl in the pink sequined dress with the glittery silver

shoes! I quite expected her to tap her shoes together like Dorothy! Christmas joy comes from children indeed."

Elf Eleonora says it so well, "What a joyous evening, for all of us. This time of the year can be challenging for those who do not have close families. During this time families gather together in the spirit of the holiday and children are eager to discover what did Santa bring them. Being part of the Church of the Resurrection and sharing the gifts with the many children dressed up in their finest with their families of our new neighbors in the Spire, allowed me to feel the spirit of Christmas. Seeing the smiles of the children my heart was filled with joy and gratitude."

Thank you, again, Resurrection for your generosity. And there will be post-COVID opportunities for more fun with our neighbors.

~ Betsy Faga

### Clergy & Staff

#### Rector

[The Rev. Jo J. Belser](#)

#### Priest Associates

[The Rev. Dr. Susan Ackley Lukens](#)

#### Seminarian Intern

[Reggie Hayes](#)

#### Seminarian

[Samson Mamour](#)

#### Director of Music

Deena Jaworski

#### Organist

Dr. Thomas Conroy

#### Bookkeeper

MaryEllen Tibbs

#### Parish Communicator

[Jimena Amurio](#)

#### Sexton

Zewdi Taddese

## How many people have we fed?

Our food pantry continues to be a force for good in our portion of Alexandria’s West End. We took a look at the statistics at year’s end, and were amazed anew at what we discovered:

- We have fed our hungry neighbors on 265 Mondays since we began the pantry on October 24, 2016.
- At the end of 2021, we had fed nearly 30,000 people in 8,609 families.
- Our average since the pandemic began is more than double the average before the pandemic.

Officially named the West End Food Pantry and supported by both Hunger Free Alexandria and ALIVE!, the pantry has always been a collaborative effort. People from our church and from St. James United Methodist Church, First Christian Church, and St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church work together to make this ministry happen.

David and Emily Ewing, Al and Peggy Tiedemann, Kathy Parnell, and Maureen Bryant spend Monday mornings and Thursday afternoons stocking the shelves with food. They are augmented as needed by Coral Childs, Betsy Faga, and Lori Thurgood.

<b>Total 2016-2022</b>	<b>8,609</b>	<b>29,810</b>
<b>Count 2016-2022</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>Average 2016-2022</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>112</b>
	<b>Guests</b>	<b>People</b>
Days open since the pandemic began		94
Total since the pandemic began	4,632	16,722
Average since pandemic began	49	178
Total before pandemic began		171
Count before pandemic began	3,977	13,088
Average before pandemic began	23	77

Our church has provided the bulk of the food for the pantry. We purchased most of it, either from the Capital Area Food Bank or from local stores to augment the food occasionally provided by individual donors or churches.

Emily Ewing makes a list each week of what’s needed and either Kat Turner or Lenore Funkhouser make the Food Bank order. They, Robert Reeves, and Kathy Parnell have a rotating schedule for picking up the food from the Food Bank’s warehouse in Lorton on the next Thursday after it was ordered.

Then, there’s the “Dawn Patrol.” Dennis Jones, Robert Reeves, Betsy Faga, and Kat Turner take turns showing up at the Panera at Inova Fairfax Hospital by 6:00 am on Monday mornings to receive day-old bread and pastry donations.

Before the pandemic, we also received fresh produce from the Saturday Farmer’s

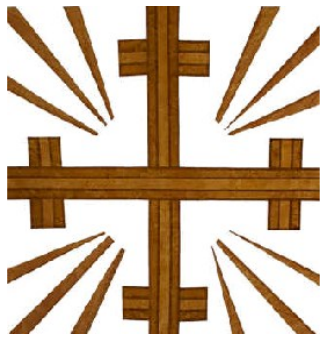
Market in Alexandria, delivered by volunteers from Christ Church.

Although we still make weekly Food Bank and Dawn Patrol pick-ups, ALIVE! has been providing the bulk of the food during the pandemic.

The pantry receives guests to distribute food each Monday evening from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. Our stocking crew and others—Kim Hildred, Michele Dominiak, Cindy Saltzman, and Lori Thurgood—have joined the Ewings, the Tiedemanns, and Kathy Parnell in opening the pantry to guests. Our crew serves one Monday evening a month and on “fifth Mondays,” for a total of 15 times a year.

“Watching this ministry in action is like watching a fresh miracle unfold each week,” says Rev. Jo. “Thank you, one and all, for helping to make this ministry work.”

~ Rev. Jo



## Church of the Resurrection

2800 Hope Way  
Alexandria 22311-2220



*Wes McBeth at his acolyting debut on January 9*

Church of the Resurrection serves the people in the Beauregard Corridor of the City of Alexandria, home to many recent immigrants. In April 2021, Resurrection completed an eight-year mission to provide 113 units of affordable housing to its community.

## My New Year's wish for you

Those of you who know me have heard my self-description as “religious but not spiritual.” But every now and then I have “a moment” and the last Sunday in Advent was one of those occasions when several elements combined to make me feel my faith in a deeper fashion.

I appreciated Elizabeth Schenck's first service as acolyte and crucifer and I saw two families with young people at the 9:00 service, buoying hopes that Resurrection can indeed experience a generational turn-over.

That Sunday's Gospel reading from the first chapter of Luke includes the Magnificat that begins, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant...” Our Forum gave us the opportunity to explore in more depth Mary's relationship with God.

We heard an announcement about the upcoming Christmas Eve gathering where our congregation will welcome our neighbors and the children of The Spire

with warm beverages and gifts.

As I sat looking at our beautiful cross, I was struck anew at just what Resurrection had accomplished in our faith journey. Yes, it was difficult, and we made many sacrifices along the way. But now we are getting ready for our first Christmas worship in our new church just as residents at The Spire prepare for their holiday celebrations in their new homes.

Maybe it's a stretch but that Sunday I felt particularly close to Mary. God had asked Resurrection to do something remarkable as an expression of our faith and we had responded. Maybe Mary would not mind if we adapted her words for Resurrection. Our souls magnify the Lord and our spirit rejoices for he has looked with favor on our congregation.

Let this Christmas season be a reminder that although most days we experience our faith quietly in our ordinary lives, we do need to be always listening for when the Holy Spirit asks us to do something more. The Holy Spirit asked Resurrection to



*(Front to back) Elizabeth Schenck, Rev. Susan, and Rev. Jo in recession at the 9:00 am service on 4Advent*

do something more, and we, like Mary, said “Yes!”

My New Year's wish for you is that you have the same kind of moment that I did on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The remembrance that what we accomplished was not for ourselves, or even for our neighbors at The Spire, but because our spirit rejoices in God our Savior.

~ Kat Turner